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Poland: Prospects for Solidarity

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An Intelligence Assessment

State Dept. review completed

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EUR 83-10079
March 1983

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An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared by the Office of European Analysis. It was coordinated with the National Intelligence Council. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Eastern Europe Division, EURA,

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Key Judgments

Information available as of 11 March 1983 was used in this report.

The suspension of martial law and the release of most internees reflect a regime calculation that Solidarity no longer poses a serious near-term threat. We believe the authorities' assessment is correct, but, in failing to satisfy demands for reform, they have ensured that social tensions, as well as the possibility of spontaneous outbursts of unrest, will remain high.

The union never recovered from the initial shock of martial law largely because of relentless regime pressure that denied it effective leadership, communications, and organization. The underground's failure to organize widespread strikes in November 1982 protesting the union's dissolution virtually destroyed the hope of most activists that they could force concessions from the regime.

The release of Walesa and other union leaders from their internment camps has brought on what we believe will be an extended and difficult discussion of what their strategy should now be. Some may argue that any resistance activity is futile against a regime so determined and able to put down protests, especially when the workers who gave the union its clout are despondent and tired. But many union activists, in our view, probably are not willing to quit.

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Some militants probably will continue to argue for and seek to organize strikes and protests, while others may try to subvert regime-created trade unions or self-management organizations. Solidarity supporters believe they should concentrate on building underground self-help organizations—a so-called parallel society. We believe underground activity will proceed without the direct participation of Walesa and other prominent leaders released from internment camps, who instead probably will limit their opposition to speaking out in favor of union "pluralism," worker self-management in factories, and freedom of speech.

We have no reason to believe that, having achieved a victory over Solidarity, the authorities will ease up in their efforts to root out the underground and intimidate would-be protesters, no matter what tactics Solidarity adopts. The low-level and fragmented resistance will be troublesome to the authorities, but will not, in our opinion, endanger their control. We believe that Premier Jaruzelski may, with the support of many regime moderates, try to co-opt the reformist spirit that Solidarity represented by giving new emphasis to the economic and bureaucratic reforms he has said

are necessary if Poland is to avoid another crisis. Even if he does try, his efforts to fill the void left by Solidarity by creating a new mass movement, new trade unions, and new self-management organs are likely to fall far short of satisfying the demands of workers or Solidarity activists—including Walesa and other moderates. The pace and extent of changes he can make will be constrained by opposition within the Polish party and by Soviet concern that he maintain full control over labor activity.

Many senior Church leaders have accepted the dissolution of Solidarity as a fait accompli and see its residual resistance activities as impediments to addressing Poland's serious problems. But some younger priests and several bishops, dissatisfied with Jozef Cardinal Glemp's leadership, are more willing to provide moral and material support to Solidarity supporters and underground activity. The divisions within the Church—which will enhance the centrifugal forces at work within opposition circles—will persist because the authorities will look to the Church hierarchy to play a moderating role and Solidarity activists will seek Church aid. But Church unity will, in our view, remain largely intact because of the traditional stress on presenting a united front to the authorities.

Solidarity as a legal actor cannot be resurrected, but we believe that the people who supported its reforms will long affect Polish political behavior. Opponents of reform will use continuing low-level resistance activity—and the occasional dramatic flareups caused by the more militant activists—to keep alive the fear of Solidarity and to prevent changes in Poland's inefficient bureaucracies. They are likely to succeed, if only because regime moderates share the hardliners' fear of a revived Solidarity. The resulting immobility almost guarantees an extended period of elevated tensions in which the authorities have to continue to rely on repression to maintain control.

The lack of reform could ensure that the young people who were Solidarity's driving force remain deeply estranged from the corrupt, inefficient political system they tried to change. These young people, with the practical experience of the Solidarity period behind them, will pose a serious, long-term challenge to the regime. In any future confrontations with the authorities, they will be better organized and more radical than before; many Poles fear that the possibility of violence and wide-scale bloodshed will be significantly higher the next time around.

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Poland: Prospects for Solidarity

A Time For Reassessment

The release of Lech Walesa and most other Solidarity leaders in conjunction with the suspension of martial law has brought on what we believe promises to be a difficult period of stocktaking by union activists. Although some will drop out of the political struggle, many others remain determined to persevere because they feel the need to preserve their personal dignity and because they believe the authorities are not able to resolve Poland's difficult political and economic problems—that is, they lost the battle, but the war is yet to come. Decisions on tactics and goals are likely to proceed, however, from what we believe will be a near unanimous assessment that the underground is in no position to challenge immediately the security-conscious regime.

Initial Shock of Martial Law

Solidarity never recovered from the initial shock of martial law, largely because of relentless regime pressure that deprived the union of leaders, communications, and organizational structure. The regime's total blackout of internal and international communications on 13 December 1981 and its well-executed internment of 6,000 key Solidarity leaders and supporters prevented the union from mounting any significant immediate counterattack. According to numerous Solidarity activists, the regime quickly came to be feared as it used threats of physical abuse, imprisonment, and loss of jobs or pay to discourage participation in strikes or demonstrations. The occasional use of excessive force by the increasingly confident regime reinforced the sense of fear.

During the initial four months of martial law, union leaders who remained at large, according to their own published statements, were able to do little more than assess their options and try to establish contacts. Solidarity activists sustained themselves with dreams of resurgence and revenge, reflected in the slogan, "The winter is yours, but the spring will be ours." The primary clandestine activity was the publication of underground leaflets and newsletters—involving almost 1,700 different titles by mid-March, according to the US Embassy—that passed word of planned protests, initiated discussion of strategy and tactics, and sought to lift morale by creating an impression that the union was on the road to recovery. But this activity, as with most other resistance efforts, relied largely on spontaneous actions by a small number of people. The severe difficulties the activists faced in reestablishing quickly an organizational base stemmed, in our view, from Solidarity's nature as a massive, loosely organized, and totally open organization that had never prepared seriously to work underground.

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Union leaders were able finally to set up a national Temporary Coordinating Committee (TKK) in April, but only after two previous efforts to constitute a national leadership had failed. Primarily under the guiding influence of moderate Zbigniew Bujak, the articulate leader of the union's Warsaw chapter, the TKK tried to restrain the emotions and actions of the rank and file; more often than not, it followed rather than led. This was because of Bujak's rejection of the concept of a highly centralized underground, difficulties in communications, and differences among the leaders—especially between Bujak and Bogdan Lis, the radical leader from Gdansk.

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Solidarity national leaders had only limited success in creating a nationwide network of underground organizations. In early August, the weekly of the Warsaw underground claimed that 14 regional coordination centers had been created, but admitted that contacts had not been established with smaller cities and factories. Many small groups—variously called Committees of Social Defense, interfactory committees, or provisional factory committees—did spring up, but they tended to be inward looking and defensive. They published papers and leaflets, polled union members,

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collected contributions, helped the families of internees, arranged occasional small protests, put up posters, and boycotted collaborators. They did not, however, prove to be effective in getting large numbers of people into the streets or in leading strikes.

The failure to organize in factories was clearly demonstrated in October, when two-day strikes in the Lenin Shipyards to protest the delegalization of Solidarity collapsed largely because no leaders came forward to take command, as Walesa had in 1980.

workers realized that anyone who assumed a leadership role would expose himself to direct and immediate retribution from the security services and the plant management. Solidarity activists in Krakow believed in early November that the union had virtually no organization left in that region.

Obstacles to a Counterattack

We believe that a key reason the underground could not organize well was penetration by the security services.

the person responsible for disseminating documents drafted by the national leadership was found to be working for the police. The secret police extensively circulated fake underground literature, which caused such confusion among the rank and file that some activists could not decide what to believe. Workers increasingly distrusted leaflets urging them to strike or demonstrate.

The security services also succeeded in arresting numerous underground leaders. Radio Solidarity broadcasts, which boosted morale from April through June, were almost completely halted by late November through arrests of key personnel. The detention on 31 August of underground activist Janusz Romaszewski caused particular consternation among Solidarity activists because he knew all the communications arrangements of the underground.

the arrest of the Wroclaw leader, Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, on 10 October had plunged his fellow activists into despair and prompted them to go into hiding. By November, police raids had put much of the underground press out of business.

In our assessment, divisions among union leaders also hindered underground activity. Debate over goals and tactics—initiated some time in March—revealed serious differences on how the resistance movement should be organized and what sort of struggle it should carry on. Writing from an internment camp, Jacek Kuron, a prominent activist, argued in the underground press for a highly centralized, well-organized resistance movement to prepare "a simultaneous offensive against all centers of power and information throughout the country." On the other hand, Bujak argued that a social outburst was not inevitable, that underground resistance was futile because of police penetration, and that a strongly centralized movement would only galvanize the authorities. He advocated a decentralized underground movement that would try to establish a "parallel society" of committees to help those out of work, operate presses, and create schools. He admitted, however, that this "struggle for position" was not the path to achieving fast and spectacular success.

Debate over whether the union should attempt a general strike to force the regime's hand became a key issue dividing moderates and radicals. Pressure for such a strike arose in late spring from militant workers who

had tired of the go-slow approach. According to a poll of workers conducted by the underground in Wroclaw in early May, 75 percent supported either a general strike or armed insurrection, with almost nine out of 10 pledging to participate.

Bogdan Lis argued in the underground press for such a strike, asserting first that the union would lose support if workers believed no "decisive steps" were being planned and later claiming that careful preparation of a general strike was necessary to prevent an uncontrolled outburst of worker resentment. As debate about a general strike raged in the underground press, such prominent Solidarity leaders as Adam Michnik and Janus Onyszkiewicz—still in internment camps—supported Bujak's opposition to a strike.

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They argued that Jaruzelski would refuse to negotiate under pressure and would not hesitate to suppress strikes. A general strike, they added, would radicalize the movement and could get out of control.

At no time during the debate laid out in the underground press did any of the senior leaders advocate violence or terror. Solidarity leaders had prided themselves on their ability to prevent bloodshed and saw it as one of their tasks to calm the hotheads. In fact, union militants persistently defended their strategy as the only way to force the regime to compromise and to prevent an explosion that would lead to widespread deaths, civil war, and a Soviet military intervention.

The argument over a general strike subsided in the early summer when Solidarity leaders called for a moratorium on strikes and demonstrations in order not to jeopardize a possible Papal visit and in hope that the regime would announce concessions on 22 July, Poland's national day. Even when these hopes proved groundless, the response of the moderates was to channel worker anger into street demonstrations at the end of August and not toward a general strike. They labeled the August demonstrations a "moral victory," and they again tried to avoid confrontation by encouraging activists to build the underground society as the primary means of defense. And, even when it became clear that the government was moving quickly to abolish the union, the underground leadership hesitated, realizing that its previous efforts to organize protests had failed and fearing that a more confrontational stand could bring bloodshed.

One factor, we believe, that fostered moderation in the leadership was the realization that workers—despite the enthusiasm shown by the underground polls—had not turned out in large numbers for strikes or demonstrations. Even during the demonstrations in August—the apparent high point of protests—only 100,000 to 120,000 people participated. Workers openly expressed the sentiment that nothing short of an all-out general strike would have a chance of success.

The abolition of Solidarity in early October was a provocative act that, according to Solidarity activists, gave new momentum to union militants, even though it provoked only limited spontaneous strikes, mainly in the Lenin shipyards where Solidarity had been born. The underground leadership laid out a plan of action that included a nationwide eight-hour strike and street demonstrations on 10 November, additional demonstrations on 11 November, a wave of protests from 13-17 December, and a general strike some time in the spring. Little happened, however, on 10 November.

as a result of the failure of the union to make good on the first phase of its plan, the top leadership descended into "savage bickering" over the failure and about how to proceed in the future. 25X1

The release of Lech Walesa on 13 November from his private internment prompted the TKK to signal a return to a more moderate course. Claiming that a "completely new" political situation had been created by the release and by the government's agreement to a Papal visit, the underground leadership called off the demonstrations planned for December. Walesa's statements and behavior after his release probably reinforced the position of the moderates in the underground. Walesa reaffirmed a cautious determination to pursue the "spirit" of the Gdansk agreements of 1980—especially the provisions for pluralism in the union movement—but called for a long-term struggle.

he remains an "idealist" who believes that the regime can never destroy Solidarity and that he still has a role to play in changing Poland's fate. 25X1

Walesa and the Underground

Walesa has admitted the continuing need for an underground,

He is gradually reestablishing contact with some former advisers who were released from internment camps as a result of the suspension of martial law, but appears to have no

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specific ideas on how to bring pressure on the authorities other than by issuing public statements. In late January, he signed an appeal with 13 former Solidarity leaders for the release of still-imprisoned union leaders and in defense of workers' rights.

Meanwhile, underground leaders have shown no signs of concluding that Walesa's release obviates the need for their continuing activities or that their activities conflict with the more limited and open role chosen by Walesa in his circumstances. Moderate underground leader Bujak commented in early January in an interview with a Western journalist that his work would complement that of Walesa. He conceded that the union underground must develop ways to allow activists to work in the open, but argued that clandestine activity continues to be necessary to help prepare for eventual overt action.

only a small number of people are actively involved in the underground; Bujak allegedly estimated during conversations with other underground activists in December that there might be as few as 200 activists in 10 different centers. This number, which presumably refers to individuals who are working full-time on resistance activities, probably has since dwindled because of continuing arrests and because some have given themselves up. Bujak's estimate probably does not include, however, a much larger number of workers who are carrying out clandestine propaganda and organizational activities while holding down factory jobs.

The difficulties in establishing and maintaining contact between the underground and those working above ground have on occasion dramatized longstanding personal and philosophical differences in the movement.

, Walesa responded to the underground leadership's call in January for an eventual general strike by noting that such a strike is not in his program.

We believe that, largely because of continuing regime pressure, union activists will move in increasingly different directions. Walesa and other former Solidarity leaders—both in the underground and among those released from internment camps—will try to devise a coherent set of goals and tactics but, in our view, will agree only on some basic principles. In its prime, Solidarity could not agree on a program; in the current environment agreement must be even more difficult. Walesa will be shown again to have only limited ability to guide debate and action, and the main challenge for him and other leaders may be to preserve a sense of unity as activists both above and underground pursue markedly different activities. Their arguments for and against five different courses of action are listed below. These courses are not, of course, mutually exclusive and several could be pursued simultaneously or sequentially depending on domestic conditions.

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Lying Low. The arguments for doing nothing are compelling. Moderates such as Walesa and Bujak, as well as militants such as Lis, have publicly admitted that the overwhelming majority of workers who gave the union its political muscle are tired of confrontation, see no benefit to symbolic acts of defiance, and are unwilling to take chances that might worsen their already difficult economic situation. This sense of despair reaches into the ranks of former union officials and advisers, and a steady trickle of underground activists in hiding since the declaration of martial law are giving themselves up to the police. In addition, a growing number of former activists have opted for the ultimate form of resignation—emigration. According to a government spokesman, as of mid-January 5,000 persons had applied to emigrate for political reasons and 1,070 activists had already left, including 37 members of Solidarity's National Commission and 233 of its provincial leaders.

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in their first weeks of liberty, former Walesa advisers lost a great deal of their belief in the continued effectiveness of resistance activity. They had been struck by the extent of public apathy as well as the efficiency of the security apparatus.

Nonetheless, Walesa and many other recently released internees—as well as remaining underground activists—believe, in our view, that the regime is not capable of resolving its economic or political problems and eventually will be forced to make concessions. They seem convinced that they must do something—if only building an underground infrastructure and pressing workers' rights through regime-controlled organs—to keep alive the spirit of Solidarity and be prepared to exploit future regime weaknesses. Writers in the underground press have tried to play down the union's loss of its mass base by arguing that only a small number of dedicated people are needed to spearhead revolutionary movements.

Sporadic Protests. Walesa and other recently released Solidarity leaders are unlikely to put much effort into organizing active resistance, realizing that the risk of arrest is too great and the chances of success too limited and perhaps calculating that enough spontaneous resistance will continue to keep pressure on the regime. Although large-scale and coordinated opposition activity has disappeared, harassment of party and government officials continues, some workers openly show support for Solidarity, and leaflets still appear. In addition, there continue to be sporadic incidents of what appears to be politically motivated sabotage, and reporting in the Polish press and from Embassy sources indicates that some underground groups have small caches of weapons. We believe that calls for strikes or demonstrations, however, will not attract significant worker support as long as the regime continues to show its determination and ability to contain and punish such resistance.

A General Strike. Failure of the planned eight-hour strike on 10 November 1982 will not dissuade radical militants from pursuing efforts to organize a general strike, even though would-be organizers probably realize, in our estimation, that it would be an uphill struggle.

In the program which it released in late January, the TKK asserted that a general strike is "inevitable," but Bujak later emphasized in an interview published in a Spanish journal that he considers a general strike an extreme measure that could succeed only under very favorable conditions. Walesa is unlikely, judging from his public comments since being released, to support the staging of a general strike any time soon, largely because of doubts about its feasibility.

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Building the Underground Society. This option, which now appears to have Walesa's support as well as that of some of the regional and local underground organizations, involves a long-term effort to build a network of underground, self-help organizations, and appeals to many, we believe, because it allows for low-level resistance activities while people wait for a better time to press the regime more directly. We believe that at least some Solidarity underground activists with whom Embassy officers have talked are exaggerating the possibility of building such a "parallel society," just as they previously overestimated their ability to force concessions through strikes and demonstrations.

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Subversion of Regime Institutions. Both Walesa and the TKK want workers to use every opportunity—and some regime-sponsored organizations—to press for their full legal rights, but the workers do not seem prepared to end the boycott of the official trade unions that began spontaneously after the regime dissolved Solidarity. Some union activists argued in October and November

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that, barring any other legal alternatives, workers should try to gain control of the new regime-sponsored unions; the TKK has urged continuation of the boycott. most reports from Western journalists, in fact, indicate continuing great

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reluctance among workers to join the new regime-sponsored unions. For many, joining amounts to capitulation and lends legitimacy to a regime endeavor that, judging by their experience, is unlikely to represent their interests. Workers' suspicions in this regard have been fueled by the heavyhanded presence of party stalwarts at union organizing sessions and the exaggerated claims of support for the new bodies. As of mid-February the regime claimed that more than 1 million workers had joined. Over the next several years, several million more probably will join—if only because the unions will take over their traditional role of providing vacations, medical care, and other economic benefits—but this will comprise only a small part of the industrial labor force of about 13 million.

Judging from his public statements, we believe Walesa seems more interested in seeking to take advantage of the regime-sponsored self-management organizations than of the new unions. Factory self-management was a key Solidarity demand, and Walesa may believe that the new self-management councils will be less easily manipulated by the regime. The councils are slated to begin functioning by the end of March, although the regime has restricted the council's powers to ensure they are not "abused."

More generally, the TKK has urged workers to take advantage of the labor code to defend their interests. Specifically, workers have been advised to demand information about production decisions and to expose mismanagement. If plant management balks, they are urged to organize group protests and refuse to work overtime. some Solidarity factory commissions are trying to collect and publicize workers' economic grievances.

The Regime

The Polish authorities clearly have demonstrated that they have the will and ability to put down any direct challenge from workers, whether it be sporadic demonstrations or work actions. We doubt that, having achieved their victory over the underground, they will soon ease up in their efforts to throttle the underground press, arrest fugitive leaders, or generally prevent underground organizational work. During the first two months of 1983, the security services arrested additional activists involved in underground publishing work. Jaruzelski in his speech on 12 December emphatically stated that "anarchy will not be allowed to enter Poland." Subsequently, other senior officials reaffirmed in public speeches their concern over the threat from the underground and the need to be on guard. 25X1

The regime probably will continue to rely heavily on the use of force, threats of imprisonment, and economic reprisal to silence would-be dissenters or to make life very uncomfortable for them. The authorities cannot stop all protests, especially if they want to convey some sense of normality by relaxing controls, but they will break up protests that promise to 25X1 encourage increased dissent. The regime will use harassment to thwart efforts to build an "underground society."[3] Finally, the authorities are well aware of the discussion about subverting the unions or self-management organizations and have provided themselves with legal and physical powers to stop such efforts. 25X1

As Solidarity leaders try to regroup their forces, Jaruzelski may finally get a chance to refocus his attention from emasculating Solidarity to introducing 25X1 the economic and administrative reforms that he has said are necessary for Poland's recovery. Jaruzelski's publicly stated, long-term goal is to create a strong, efficient state bureaucracy that will be able to manage the country and improve living conditions, thus preventing yet another explosion of public anger. His 25X1 initial efforts to reform the economy or to fill the void left by the dissolution of Solidarity have not, however, been far reaching or effective. 25X1

The national patriotic movement (Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth), in which Jaruzelski has appeared to place some hope as a vehicle for creating 25X1 "national accord," has failed to attract support, especially from the young. According to Embassy contacts, this is largely because it has been staffed and

[3] Jarek Kuron, the prominent dissident from pre-Solidarity days who helped popularize this concept in the late 1970s, has said the effort cannot succeed because the current authorities will not be as lenient as was then–party leader Gierek. 25X1

promoted by discredited party and government officials. The new trade unions, as mentioned earlier, face similar credibility problems.

In fact, a considerable gap probably exists between the maximum that Jaruzelski is willing to offer in search of social accord and the minimum that Polish society could find acceptable. We believe Jaruzelski will remain opposed to the creation of any institutions with substantial autonomy; certainly, his goal of creating an effective centralized administration does not allow for meaningful inputs from society or restraints on the regime's freedom of action.

Whatever his personal intentions or desires, we believe that Jaruzelski does not have a free hand. He continues to rely heavily on existing party and government bureaucracies that prefer the old and often ineffective methods. Although Jaruzelski appears to doubt the competence of many in the party apparatus, the need to respect the "leading role of the party" limits the extent and pace of changes he can make. Party members, meanwhile, may become more quarrelsome as they see the military continue to wield considerable power.

Jaruzelski must also take into account Moscow's consistent opposition to any form of labor organization that could become a political rival to the party. In the months preceding Solidarity's delegalization, the Soviets made it clear that they were impatient for decisive action; their subsequent commentary has indicated general satisfaction with Jaruzelski's stern handling of Solidarity's remnants. Moscow appears to recognize that future Polish trade unions will differ from the Soviet model, but Jaruzelski will have to maintain firm control over labor activity in order to avoid renewed Soviet criticism.

The Church

Officials of the Catholic Church publicly expressed deep regret at the summary dissolution of Solidarity, but most accept the action as a fait accompli.

The Church, generally, probably considers pursuit of any of residual Solidarity's options as an impediment to the nation's getting on with its formidable tasks. As part of its continuing effort to prevent bloodshed, the Church will seek, we believe, to guide Walesa away from provoking the regime.

In any case, the regime would not, in our estimation, allow him to occupy any position— 25X1
Church-related or otherwise—that he could use to criticize or challenge the authorities.

Some local priests are likely to continue helping Solidarity supporters and to bitterly criticize the 25X1
regime. Solidarity activists will continue to use Church events as meeting places and, occasionally, as the starting point for demonstrations. The higher echelons of the Church probably will try to set limits on such help, however, because they do not want to give the regime an excuse to rescind Church privileges or to endanger the Papal visit now slated to begin in June. The Church Episcopate will probably limit itself to periodic critiques of regime policy and to efforts behind the scenes to get the regime to adopt more conciliatory policies. 25X1

The schizophrenia in the Church's attitude toward resistance activities—with Glemp and the Episcopate supporting moderation and the lower levels of the clergy sometimes giving moral and physical support to more militant positions—seems likely to reinforce the centrifugal forces at work within opposition forces. The moderate Bujak has complained that the Church leadership has not been aggressive in its criticism of the regime. Also, Walesa has been sharply criticized, for being too much under Glemp's influence. 25X1 25X1

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The official stance of the Church regarding Solidarity has generated some internal criticism that Glemp has been too weak and conciliatory toward the regime. Such beliefs apparently are shared by a few bishops but seem to come predominantly from younger parish priests, who are closer to the suffering of their people.

Glemp's actions have reflected the gradualist philosophy he learned from his predecessor, Cardinal Wyszynski, and which, we believe, is basically shared by Pope John Paul II. Polish Church leaders believe that the Church has remained strong because it has remained unified against the Communist authorities, and we believe concerns about maintaining unity will limit disagreement over current tactics.

Prospects

Solidarity as a legal actor cannot be resurrected, but we believe that the political and organizational skills of the younger generation who supported it and the ideas it fostered have become permanent additions to the Polish political spectrum. Polish workers have long memories, and the betrayal they felt at the imposition of martial law will condition their attitudes toward the authorities for years to come.[4] Moreover, the problems which led to the rise of Solidarity have not been resolved.

In its weakened state Solidarity cannot generate widespread strikes or demonstrations. The most serious protests from the regime's point of view will be spontaneous strikes and demonstrations that take both the underground and the security services by surprise. We believe prospects for political or economic improvement in the next few years are so dismal, and popular anger and resentment so deep, that serious disturbances cannot be prevented. The incidents triggering such explosions could be as trivial as the firing of a crane operator at the Lenin Shipyards (which sparked the strikes there in 1980) or the raising of prices on scarce consumer goods.

Alternatively, the initiative for a confrontation could come from the small groups of extremist Solidarity militants who might resort to terrorism. Although the probability of an act such as the assassination of Jaruzelski or some other official is not high, such a thing could happen and would lead to retribution from the security forces that would provoke widespread protests.[5]

Such an event, if it caught the security services unprepared and led to an initial victory by protesting workers, could provoke a rapidly accelerating series of strikes. The situation might become particularly serious if former union leaders, including Walesa, joined the workers. They would provide the leadership and inspiration that have been missing since the imposition of martial law. There is little prospect, however, that workers could "win" in such circumstances as they did with the signing of the Gdansk accords in August of 1980. The current authorities are determined to avoid making concessions under pressure and, we believe, clearly are willing to use force to show their resolve. The realization by most Poles that the regime would carry out its threats limited resistance under martial law and seems likely to dampen the will to resist openly in the near future.

Solidarity's greatest impact over the next several years, in our view, will not be in what it can force the regime to do, but in the ways its specter may prevent the regime from adopting conciliatory policies. The ongoing but low-level resistance activity will be a constant reminder to the authorities of their security concerns and, we believe, will be used by security forces and party hardliners to reinforce their demands

[4] Walesa cut his teeth on oppositional activity in the shipyard strike in Gdansk in 1970, and he persisted until his efforts bore fruit.

[5] One of the most radical underground organizations—"Combatant Solidarity" in Wroclaw—advocated in 1982 the employment of "revolutionary means" to advance its interests.

This group may have been responsible for some of the scattered sabotage reported in the press.

for political power. The "spirit of Solidarity past" certainly will play a key role in discussions within the party and government on future economic and political policies.

the party has been so traumatized by the experience with Solidarity between August 1980 and December 1981 that no compromise is possible. At the 10th Central Committee plenum in October 1982, party hardliners attacked some of the regime's economic reforms—which Solidarity had supported—and implicitly criticized persons in the party who backed them, including Jaruzelski. Even though Jaruzelski easily turned back the criticism, the episode illustrates that political and economic changes will be attacked and resisted because, it will be claimed, they threaten to allow Solidarity to regain its former influence. The most determined and effective resistance to change may not come from Warsaw, however, but from intermediate and lower level bureaucrats intent on seeking revenge for what they suffered during the Solidarity era and on reestablishing unquestioned power.

We believe that the combination of Jaruzelski's determination to restore the essential elements of a centralized "socialist" system, combined with political resistance by hardliners to changes that he does not consider threatening to the system, will lead to a high degree of immobility. It seems unlikely that the regime can create much legitimacy without first making concessions to union pluralism that Jaruzelski neither could nor would make. And, on the economic side, while some marginal improvement is possible, we believe worker alienation combined with an inefficient economic system highly resistant to reform and little additional help from East or West will ensure that the economy can at best limp along. Thus, in the coming years the authorities will probably be compelled to rely heavily on their repressive apparatus, directly or indirectly, to maintain control.

Over the longer term some Poles, especially moderates in the regime, appear to believe that Poland might be able to make use of the Hungarian experience to create trust of the authorities and a more efficient bureaucracy. Their interest is evident from the number of official visits between Warsaw and Budapest and the periodic positive assessments of Hungarian accomplishments. There are, however, several factors that will work against Jaruzelski's being able to import a solution to his problem. The Hungarian authorities thoroughly broke the spirit of resistance during five years of often-brutal repression after 1956. The spirit of passive resistance is still strong in Poland, and it is unlikely that Jaruzelski or any successor can exterminate it. Secondly, as mentioned above, the party and government bureaucracies will continue to pose strong resistance to concessions. Thus, although the trappings are different, the political dynamics operating in Jaruzelski's Poland are essentially the same as those in Gomulka's or Gierek's. This means, we believe, that the next Polish crisis is only awaiting some new catalyst to spark it and that residual Solidarity, despite its divisions and weaknesses, will indeed have the opportunity for another round.

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